

Statement by Karilyn Bales – March 19, 2012

What happened on the night of March 11 in Kandahar Province was a terrible and heartbreaking tragedy.

My family including my and Bob's extended families are all profoundly sad. We extend our condolences to all the people of the Panjawai District, our hearts go out too all of them, especially to the parents, brothers, sisters and grandparents of the children who perished.

I know that all good people around the world, regardless of nationality, religion or political values, join me in grieving that such a terrible thing could happen.

Our family has little information beyond what we read and see in the media. What has been reported is completely out of character of the man I know and admire. Please respect me when I say I cannot shed any light on what happened that night, so please do not ask.

I too want to know what happened. I want to know how this could be.

I have no indication that my family's own safety is at risk, but I appreciate the efforts that have been undertaken to protect us. I hope there will soon be no reason for protection of families, whether here or in Kandahar Province, or anywhere, because the pain inevitably inflicted in war should never be an excuse to inflict yet more pain. The cycle must be broken. We must find peace.

I know the media has a right to pursue and report news. As you do your jobs, I plead with you to respect the trauma that I and my extended family are experiencing. Please allow us some peace and time as we try to make sense of something that makes no sense at all.

All I can do now is emphasize my sadness and my condolences to the families in Panjawai for their terrible loss. The victims and their families are all in my prayers, as is my husband who I love very much.

End of Statement